

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ANKARA 03305 261513Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3333

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 3305

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, MARR, PFOR, TU

SUBJ: LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER DEMIREL TO PRESIDENT FORD
ON CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF NEW DEFENSE COOPERATION
AGREEMENT

1. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS PROVIDED THE EMBASSY A
COURTESY COPY OF AN APRIL 25 LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER
DEMIREL TO THE PRESIDENT, WHICH AMBASSADOR ESENBEL HAS
BEEN INSTRUCTED TO DELIVER IN WASHINGTON. FOLLOWING IS
TEXT:

BEGIN TEXT:

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,
I AM CONFIDENT YOU WILL SHARE MY VIEW THAT THE AGREEMENT
SIGNED ON MARCH 26TH, 1976 DURING THE VISIT OF FOREIGN
MINISTER IHSAN SABRI CAGLAYANGIL TO WASHINGTON CONSTITUTES
A SIGNIFICANT AND POSITIVE STEP IN OUR MUTUAL EFFORTS
TO REINVIGORATE OUR BILATERAL DEFENSE COOPERATION AND
RESTORE FRIENDSHIP AND TRUST WHICH CHARACTERIZED THE
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES FOR THE LAST
THREE DECADES.

AFTER I LEFT THE MEETING WHICH I HAD WITH YOU IN
HELSINKI, I HAD DECLARED TO NEWSMEN INTER ALIA: "...
WE WILL DO EVERYTHING NOT TO SPOIL RELATIONS BETWEEN
TURKEY AND THE UNITED STATES...." IN ALL OUR ENDEAVORS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ANKARA 03305 261513Z

IN THIS DIRECTION WE HAVE CONSTANTLY BEEN GUIDED BY

THIS THOUGHT.

NO DOUBT THIS AGREEMENT CONSTITUTES A COMPROMISE BETWEEN THE RESPECTIVE VIEWS OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. IN CONDUCTING THESE NEGOTIATIONS MY GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN MAINLY GUIDED BY THE IMPERATIVES OF HIGHER INTERESTS WHICH WE BELIEVED TO BE COMMON FOR THE RESPECTIVE SECURITY OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES AND FOR THAT OF THE ALLIANCE TO WHICH WE BOTH BELONG RATHER THAN BY TECHNICALITIES OF LESSER SIGNIFICANCE. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT DID THE SAME. THEREFORE THE CONCLUSION REACHED AFTER THE INTENSIVE AND HARD NEGOTIATIONS CONSTITUTES A DELICATE BALANCE BASED ON MUTUAL SACRIFICES BETWEEN THE RESPECTIVE POSITIONS OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS.

REPORTS REACHING US FROM WASHINGTON INDICATE THAT SOME TENDENCIES EXIST WITHIN THE CONGRESS TO OPPOSE THIS AGREEMENT. ALTHOUGH I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO JUDGE HOW MUCH THESE TENDENCIES WILL BE INFLUENTIAL ON THE FINAL OUTCOME I, HOWEVER, DEEM IT NECESSARY TO INFORM YOU ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES ON TURKEY SHOULD THE CONGRESS CHOOSE TO NEGATE THIS AGREEMENT.

AS YOU KNOW TURKEY VIEWS ITS MEMBERSHIP TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC ALLIANCE AND ITS CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES IN THE FIELD OF BILATERAL DEFENSE AS THE MAIN PILLAR OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY AND VITAL REQUIREMENT FOR ITS SECURITY. THIS HAS BEEN OUR POLICY IN THE PAST AND WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS IN OUR INTEREST TO CONTINUE IN SUCH A POLICY IN FUTURE. BUT I WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT TO YOU IN ALL FRANKNESS THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO JUSTIFY SUCH A POLICY TO OUR PUBLIC OPINION WHEN WE WILL BE CONSTANTLY OFFENDED BY THE ACTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS. COOPERATION AND FRIENDSHIP CANNOT BE MAINTAINED WHEN ONE OF THE PARTIES CONSTANTLY DISPLAYS HOSTILITY. MUTUALITY, GOODWILL AND TRUST ARE ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITES FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF SUCH A RELATIONSHIP AND WHERE THEY LACK, NO GOODWILL WILL BE ENOUGH TO MAINTAIN IT.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ANKARA 03305 261513Z

IT IS CERTAINLY NOT UP TO ME TO POINT OUT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS WHERE ITS COUNTRY'S INTERESTS LIE. BUT I CAN INDULGE MYSELF IN SAYING THAT IF THE OCCASION PROVIDED TO US BY THE SINGING OF THE LAST AGREEMENT IS LOST NOTHING TO BE GAINED BY SUCH AN ACTION WILL BE ENOUGH TO COMPENSATE THE LOSS WHICH WILL THUS BE INCURRED. BECAUSE, AS YOU WILL UNDERSTAND, ANOTHER SERIOUS SETBACK WILL UNAVOIDABLY HAVE FATAL CONSEQUENCES ON OUR ALREADY

DAMAGED RELATIONSHIP WHICH WITH MUTUAL ENDEAVORS WE HAVE INTENSIVELY WORKED TO REVITALIZE DESPITE ADVERSE CONDITIONS CREATED BY THE CONGRESS. HISTORIANS WILL SERIOUSLY QUESTION THE LOGIC OF RUINING THE EFFORTS OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO RESTORE A RELATIONSHIP WHICH IS SO STRIKINGLY IN THEIR MUTUAL INTEREST AND OF FORCING TURKEY TO OPT A COURSE OF ACTION WHICH IT IS UNWILLING TO TAKE AND WHICH IS SO OPENLY AGAINST UNITED STATES' INTERESTS AS WELL AS THE INTERESTS OF AN ALLIANCE IT COMMITTED ITSELF TO PROTECT.

IF THIS AGREEMENT IS TO BE TURNED DOWN BY THE CONGRESS, IT IS EVIDENT THAT ALL EFFORTS WHICH WE HAVE MUTUALLY MADE TO REINVIGORATE OUR RELATIONSHIP WILL BE WASTED AND IT WILL BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN TO ANYBODY WHY WE CONCLUDED AN AGREEMENT WHICH HAD NO CHANCE OF CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL. THE SETBACK TO BE CREATED BY SUCH AN UNFORTUNATE DEVELOPMENT WILL BRING ABOUT MUCH MORE SERIOUS CONDITIONS THAN THOSE PREVAILED PRIOR TO THE CONCLUSION OF THIS AGREEMENT AND WOULD LEAVE LITTLE HOPE OF SUCCESS IF NONE, FOR OUR SUBSEQUENT EFFORTS TO REDUCE THE DAMAGE TO THE MINIMUM. I AM SURE NONE OF US WOULD WISH TO SEE CONDITIONS IN WHICH WE ALL WOULD HAVE PREFERRED THIS AGREEMENT NOT CONCLUDED AT ALL.

I THOUGHT I SHOULD PUT THESE VIEWS TO YOU IN ALL FRANKNESS, AT THIS STAGE WHICH I BELIEVE IS HISTORICALLY MOST CRITICAL, AND IN DOING SO, I HAVE BEEN EXCLUSIVELY GUIDED BY MY VERY SINCERE BELIEF IN THE NECESSITY OF MAINTAINING THE FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES WHICH I KNOW IS EQUALLY AND SINCERELY SHARED BY YOU.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 ANKARA 03305 261513Z

SULEYMAN DEMIREL
PRIME MINISTER
OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
END TEXT
MACOMBER

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